

BARKERLEMAR

ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS

DES MOINES USTFIELDS PILOT

Forest Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa
Project No. IADNR 05006
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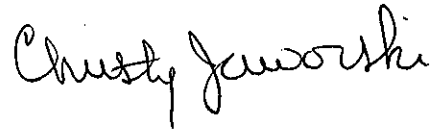
**Des Moines USTFields Pilot
Forest Avenue
Des Moines, IA**

Prepared for:

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Executive Summary

BARKER LEMAR ENGINEERING CONSULTANTS (BARKER LEMAR) was contracted by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) to conduct assessment activities under the USTField Pilot Program on sites that may have potentially had a petroleum release.

The area chosen for the USTfield program was the Drake neighborhood, located in the north central part of Des Moines, Iowa. The grant in the Drake area was focused along Forest and University Avenues from 13th to 31st Streets. This was further narrowed down to properties along Forest Avenue during the work plan review. Forest Avenue is one of the main commercial east-west arteries in the area and was chosen for the project because of several vacant and underutilized properties along this corridor that were former petroleum retail facilities. These facilities were likely built in the 1920's through the 1940's. Drake University Campus is located along this corridor between 25th and 31st Streets.

The objectives of the USTfield Pilot Program identified in the grant were the following:

- Identify, assess, and remediate properties along the Forest Avenue corridor and remove environmental barriers to redevelopment.
- Create an inventory of developable commercial and residential sites.
- Draft a work plan that the neighborhood and Drake University will implement to encourage area revitalization.
- Evaluate project process and outcomes and share findings with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the State of Iowa, and the City of Des Moines in order to assist other neighborhoods and communities.

BARKER LEMAR'S role in these objectives was to identify, assess and remediate properties along the Forest and University Avenue corridors and remove the environmental barriers to redevelopment.

Eleven properties were assessed and up to 3 million dollars of additional funding was leveraged during the Pilot project. One property, identified as the City's number one priority for redevelopment, and which had a history of non-compliance issues dating back to the early 1990's, including an Administrative Order, was addressed during the pilot demonstration. This site was deemed eligible for funding through the State's remedial petroleum fund, therefore grant funding was not required to assess the property. The grant program did provide the impetus to focus attention on this site, and funding for State personnel to get the site assessed and classified under the Iowa Risk-Based Corrective Action (RBCA) program.

Contamination was present on four of the eleven properties assessed. These properties were able to obtain funding through the State's Innocent Land Owner Fund to assist in paying for the assessment and remedial activities, if required. RBCA Assessments have been completed for the properties. Three properties were classified as high-risk under the RBCA assessment process and one as no further action (NFA). Remedial activities for the three high-risk properties, include removal of high risk receptors (plastic water lines) and will be completed in 2005. This may allow for reclassification of these sites to no further action.

Project success was aided by the time spent to develop personal contact with property owners, which allowed for access to the properties, and the time spent assisting property owners to obtain additional funding, which assured them a mechanism to solve potential problems identified during the USTField assessment. Owners were more likely to give access knowing they may not have to fund a cleanup if contamination was discovered.

Another aspect of project success was the relationship between the IDNR and **BARKER LEMAR**. This allowed for a flexible work plan approach and quick turn around time on decisions without long bureaucratic processes.

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FIGURES

Figure 1: Location of City of Des Moines USTField Pilot

Figure 2: Identified Properties

Figure 3: Properties Assessed During the USTField Pilot

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Property #4 – 1820 Forest

Appendix B: Property #5 – 1904 Forest

Appendix C: Property #9 – 1374 21st Street

Appendix D: Site #11 – 2206 Forest

Appendix E: Site #43 – 1619 Keosauqua Way

Appendix F: Site #12 – 2301 Forest

Appendix G: Site #23 – 3116 Forest Avenue

1.0 Introduction

The USTfields program is a federally funded initiative under the Brownfield program. It was developed to specifically assist in redevelopment of sites that have, or are perceived as having, petroleum contamination issues from underground storage tanks. The grant is awarded in a competitive process. In June 2002, the EPA awarded a \$100,000 grant to the City of Des Moines, as part of the USTfields initiative. The IDNR administered the grant through a Cooperative Agreement between the IDNR and the EPA.

BARKER LEMAR was awarded a contract by the IDNR and the City of Des Moines to provide necessary services to complete the City of Des Moines USTfields Project. **BARKER LEMAR'S** role was to identify, assess, and remediate properties along the Forest Avenue corridor and remove the environmental barriers to redevelopment. Services required included identifying properties, assisting with property access issues, conducting assessment activities, conducting geophysical surveys, and completing Tier 1 and Tier 2 RBCA assessments.

Partners in the program included the City of Des Moines, the EPA, the Iowa Underground Storage Tank Financial Responsibility Program, Drake University, the Forest Avenue Corridor Group, and **BARKER LEMAR**.

An additional goal was to utilize the USTfield funding source to leverage additional funding sources in Iowa that are available for petroleum assessments and remediation. These funds include the Innocent Landowner Fund and the Global Insurance Settlement Fund. Money in these funds were obtained from a settlement negotiated between the State of Iowa and major oil companies, including Amoco, Arco (Sinclair), Champlin, Chevron (Gulf), Conoco, Fina/AtoFina, Kerr-McGee, Oxy UST, Phillips, Southland, Sunoco, Texaco (Skelly), and Total/TPI.

2.0 Background

In August 2003, **BARKER LEMAR** met with the City of Des Moines to determine the City's priorities for redevelopment in the area. The City identified four priority areas. A meeting was also held with the Forest Avenue Corridor Group in August 2003 to provide information and inform the citizen's of the goals of the project. **BARKER LEMAR** compiled this information along with a review of the potential impacted properties in the area, met with the IDNR, and a work plan was prepared to evaluate several properties in the area for possible petroleum impact.

Additional activities completed by **BARKER LEMAR** over the course of the project included the preparation of a Quality Assurance Project Plan approved by the IDNR and preparation of health and safety plans for site activities.

3.0 Identified Sites

BARKER LEMAR reviewed historical information, which included R.L. Polk City Directories from 1920 through 2000 and the City of Des Moines's copies of Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. The city directories were reviewed in five year increments. Sanborn maps were produced for urban areas since the late 1800s and were originally utilized for determining fire hazards. These often show locations of gasoline stations and underground storage tanks and are now used to assist in identify potential environmental property hazards. Properties identified in this historic review were then compared to known underground storage tank sites in the area by reviewing the IDNR's registered underground storage tanks (USTs) and leaking underground storage tanks (LUSTs) records. Sites were mapped and color coded on a parcel map to identify sites already classified under the Iowa Risk-Based Corrective Action (RBCA) program. Classification for these sites included high risk, high risk limited, low risk, in progress or NFA. Sites where no investigation had been conducted, but where past petroleum activities were suspected, were also identified on the map. This information is shown in Figure 2. Additional information gathered for this map included utilities and zoning, which affect potential redevelopment goals and risk-based classifications during assessment activities.

4.0 Preliminary Assessment Activities

Preliminary assessment activities were proposed for nine sites during a meeting between the IDNR and **BARKER LEMAR** in December 2003. These are identified as sites number 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 11, 12, 36 and 43 as shown on Figure 2. Access agreements were sent out by the IDNR to each of these property owners. One additional property was later assessed as part of the program (site #3), and information was reviewed for an additional property (#23), which allowed for a no further action letter from the IDNR for this site.

The following describes the activities for each site:

4.1 Site 4 – 1820 Forest

This property is currently owned by the Des Moines Independent Community School District. During the preliminary assessment activities the property was owned by Polk County, which had obtained the property through a tax sale. In January 2004, Polk County signed the access agreement for inclusion in the

USTfields Pilot program.



Property at 1820 Forest prior to USTfields



Property at 1820 Forest in April 2005

The records review for this site indicated it was a filling station from approximately 1946 through 1955 and two underground storage tanks were located on the western side of the property. No information was available on the type or size of tanks on site or if they were removed or filled in place.

On February 23, 2005, **BARKER LEMAR** advanced three soil borings, which were converted to temporary monitoring wells. Borings were placed in areas considered potential former tank locations and to triangulate the site to assess groundwater flow. Soil samples were screened at approximately two feet intervals with a photoionization detector (PID). No hydrocarbons were detected by the PID, so soil samples were collected at the groundwater/soil interface. Water samples were collected from the temporary monitoring wells. No contamination was detected in the soil or groundwater on the site. A copy of the report is found in Appendix A.

Additional assessment activities were conducted at this site and are further described in section 5.1.

4.2 Site 5 – 1904 Forest

This property is currently owned by Polk County. In January 2004, Polk County signed the access agreement for inclusion in the USTfields Pilot program.

The records review for this site indicated it was a service station from approximately 1930 through 1950 and two tanks were reportedly located on the eastern side of the property. Two orphan tanks were found by Polk County in June 2002. These tanks were found on the property adjacent to the west and identified as 1918 Forest. These tanks were not believed to be tanks associated with the gas station site at 1904 Forest. The property at 1918 Forest was identified as an automobile repair facility in the past and it is believed these tanks were associated with that business. Therefore, it remained unknown if tanks were removed from the property at 1904 Forest.

On February 19, 2004, **BARKER LEMAR** advanced three soil borings, which were converted to temporary monitoring wells. Borings were placed in areas

groundwater flow. Soil samples were screened at approximately two feet intervals with a photoionization detector (PID). No hydrocarbons were detected by the PID, so soil samples were collected at the groundwater/soil interface. Water samples were collected from the temporary monitoring wells. Total extractable hydrocarbon as waste oil was detected in the soil but was below the IDNR target levels. No contamination was detected in the groundwater. A copy of the report is found in Appendix B.

On November 18, 2004, the IDNR issued a letter stating no further action was required at this time. A copy of the letter is included in Appendix B.

BARKER LEMAR was contacted by a developer who was interested in this parcel in June 2004. A Phase I assessment was conducted for the developer and based on the information already obtained during the USTfield work, a Phase II was not required. This allowed for the project to move ahead. In November 2004, a reliance letter was provided to allow for funding of the project. This project is reportedly a low-income housing project and is currently in the construction phase.

4.3 Site 7 – 2024 Forest

This property is currently owned by Polk County and leased to a private business owner. An access agreement was sent in December 2003. In February 2004, the IDNR followed up to see why the access agreement had not been signed by Polk County. Polk County indicated they had not signed due to access issues with the leasee on the property. Discussions between the IDNR



and **BARKER LEMAR** determined the site could likely reach no further action status with little additional work on the site. **BARKER LEMAR** contacted Polk County again and explained the situation and that little disruption to the business would be required. Polk County signed an access agreement in May 2004. With

assistance from **BARKER LEMAR**, Polk County applied for Innocent Land Owner Funding and was deemed eligible in August 2004. Site assessment activities are underway on the site. The site will likely be classified as high risk for a plastic water line receptor. This will likely be replaced in 2005, which should allow for site reclassification to no further action.

4.4 Site 8 – 1401 21st Street

This property is currently owned by a private entity. Signed access was not received for this property. However, a review of previous assessment activities completed on this project indicate proposed work for the property at 2024 Forest, which was originally assessed with this property as one release, and proposed work in the City right-of-way may allow for reclassification to no further action. Work is expected to be completed in 2005.

4.5 Site 9 – 1374 21st Street

This property is currently owned by Polk County. An access agreement was signed in January 2004. The work completed for this property will be incorporated into the work for properties #7 (2024 Forest) and #8 (1421 21st Street) because these properties were originally assessed as one release. This parcel is currently a vacant lot. In February 2004, fourteen geoprobe points were installed to determine if underground storage tanks remained at the site. No obstructions were encountered. A copy of this report is included in Appendix C. Additional work completed on this property, and which will be incorporated into the work for properties #7 and #8, included the reinstallation of a soil boring due to a former soil source at this location, and additional groundwater sampling at an existing monitoring well. This site was deemed eligible for Innocent Landowner Funding in August 2004.



4.6 Site 11 – 2206 Forest

This property is currently owned by a private entity. The property owner, Mr. Steven Boyt, signed a property access agreement in January 2004. The property is currently used as an automobile repair facility. The property was identified as a station from approximately 1930 through 1960. According to

identified as a station from approximately 1930 through 1960. According to Sanborn insurance maps, three tanks were reportedly located on the eastern side of the property. The property owner indicated he bought the property from Shell Oil in the early 1970's. Underground storage tanks are known to be on site and are reportedly filled in place per regulations at the time of closure.

On March 22, 2004, **BARKER LEMAR** advanced three soil borings, which were converted to temporary monitoring wells. Borings were placed in areas considered potential former tank locations and to triangulate the site to assess groundwater flow. Soil samples were screened at approximately two feet intervals with a photoionization detector (PID). No hydrocarbons were detected by the PID, so soil samples were collected at the groundwater/soil interface. Water samples were collected from the temporary monitoring wells. Detectable concentrations of total extractable hydrocarbons (TEH) as gasoline were present in the soil and MTBE, benzene, ethylbenzene and TEH were detected in the groundwater. Concentrations of detected compounds were either below IDNR action levels, or there are no established action levels for the compounds. A copy of the report is found in Appendix D.

Because the tanks were reportedly filled in place, and contamination found during assessment activities was below IDNR target levels, the IDNR sent a letter to Mr. Boyt indicating a release was not verified on the site and no further action was required at this time in March 2005. A copy of this letter is found in Appendix D.

4.7 Site 12 – 2301 Forest

This property was owned by a private entity, Michael Kelly, at the time of the assessment activities. Access was received for the property in December 2003. The records review indicated the property was likely a gas station from approximately 1940 through 1976. Reportedly, three underground storage tanks were located on the eastern side of the property. Tanks were reportedly removed from the site in 1981, prior to current closure sampling requirements.



On February 19, 2004, **BARKER LEMAR** advanced three soil borings, which were converted to temporary monitoring wells. Borings were placed in areas considered potential former tank locations and to triangulate the site to assess groundwater flow. Soil samples were screened at approximately two feet intervals with a photoionization detector (PID). No hydrocarbons were detected by the PID, so soil samples were collected at the groundwater/soil interface. Water samples were collected from the temporary monitoring wells. Benzene, ethylbenzene, xylenes, and TEH as gasoline were detected in the soil. Concentrations were below IDNR target levels. Benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene and xylenes were detected in the groundwater. Benzene was detected above IDNR target levels. A copy of the report is found in Appendix E.

In July 2004, the IDNR sent a letter requesting that in lieu of a full Tier 1 assessment, limited additional work be completed to allow for site reclassification. This letter was returned as unclaimed and when IDNR contacted Polk County's Treasurer's Office they learned the property was up for tax sale due to delinquent taxes. Iowa DNR instructed **BARKER LEMAR** to proceed with the additional work, which included a well survey. This work was completed in August 2004. The IDNR issued a "No Action Required" letter for the site in November 2004. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix E.

4.8 Site 36 – 2800 University

This property is owned by Drake University and is leased. The property is currently used as a cleaners, but was formerly a gas station. An access agreement was sent to Drake University on December 24, 2003. Drake University declined inclusion in the USTfields pilot on February 11, 2004. They

indicated the University did not have any intention of selling this property in the future and had a long term lease holder. No further work was conducted on this site.

4.9 Site 43 – 1619 Keosauqua Way

This property is owned by Polk County. The property is currently a vacant lot. An access agreement was received from Polk County in January 2004. Records reviewed indicated the property was likely a gas station from approximately 1930 through 1935.



On February 22, 2004, **BARKER LEMAR** advanced two soil borings, which were converted to temporary monitoring wells. A third boring could not be installed due to a steep grade on the eastern portion of the property. Borings were placed in areas considered potential former tank locations and to assess groundwater flow. Soil samples were screened at approximately two foot intervals with a photoionization detector (PID). No hydrocarbons were detected by the PID, so soil samples were collected at the groundwater/soil interface. TEH, as waste oil was detected in the soil but was below IDNR target levels. No contamination was detected in the groundwater. A copy of the report is found in Appendix F.

Due to the possibility of tanks still located on the site, an electromagnetic (EM) survey was conducted in September 2004. Anomalies were detected in the area, but due to the size and location of the parcel, it was decided there was little likelihood of future development, therefore additional work was not conducted. The IDNR sent a letter to Polk County in November 2004, indicating no further action will be required at this time. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix F.

4.10 Site 10 – 2201 Forest Avenue



redevelopment. During discussions at preliminary USTfield meetings, this property was identified as eligible for funding from the remedial fund and would not require USTfield funding. The previous owner, who had been uncooperative and had a

long history of non-compliance, no longer owned the property. The IDNR contacted the new property owner and worked closely with them to get additional funding for the required assessment work through the Innocent Land Owner Fund and Global Settlement Fund. The current owner was deemed eligible for the additional funding. **BARKER LEMAR** conducted activities to complete a RBCA assessment on the property. A Tier 2 assessment was submitted to the IDNR in February 2005, classifying the site has high risk due to the presence of plastic water lines. Once the Tier 2 is approved by the DNR, corrective action activities will include replacement of the plastic water line and will allow for likely site reclassification to low risk or no further action, and future redevelopment.

4.11 Site 3 – 1343 13th Street

This property is currently owned by a non-profit agency. A RBCA assessment was previously completed for this site in 2000. However, this was done under a City grant, and after the grant money was gone, no additional work was done at the site. A review of information indicated the site would likely be eligible for Innocent Land Owner (ILO) Funding and Global Settlement Funding. **BARKER LEMAR** and the IDNR conducted necessary record reviews to verify historical information for the funding agency, and the IDNR assisted the site owner with filling out the required paperwork to get funding approval for ILO and Global Settlement monies. **BARKER LEMAR** and the IDNR also attended a meeting with the non-profit group at their facility to educate them on the funding available and explain the assessment activities that would be done at the site.

In August 2004, the site was determined to be eligible for ILO funding. An access agreement was received in November 2004. **BARKER LEMAR** conducted

updated sampling activities in December 2004. Based on the updated information, a revised Tier 2 RBCA assessment was completed which allowed for site reclassification to No Action Required. This was submitted to the IDNR in February 2005 and the report is currently under review.

4.12 Site ²³12 – 3116 Forest Avenue

This property was identified as a possible USTfield target property. A tank closure was conducted on orphan tanks at the site in August 2001. The Drake University Real Estate Department provided a Phase I and Phase II report completed in October 2001 to the IDNR. Based on the results of the sampling activities completed during the tank closure and the Phase II assessment, the IDNR issued a letter stating that no further action was required at this time on August 20, 2004. A copy of this letter is included in Appendix G.

5.0 Additional Assessment Activities

5.1 Electromagnetic (EM) Survey

After completion of the initial assessments above, IDNR requested further work on some of the sites to show underground storage tanks were not present. **BARKER LEMAR** proposed an electromagnetic survey to identify potential underground storage tanks. This was conducted on properties #4 (1820 Forest), #5 (1904 Forest), #7 (2204/06 Forest), and #43 (1619 Keo).

A Geonics EM61 high sensitivity metal detector was used to assess the subsurface of the sites for anomalies. During the week of August 15, 2004, **BARKER LEMAR** collected data from the sites using the EM61 instrument. Results of the survey indicated anomalies were present on all four properties. The anomaly identified on site #5 did not appear to be in the area of possible tanks and was determined to likely be the former foundation of buildings in the area. No additional assessment was proposed for this property. Property #7, was determined to have underground storage tanks, but these were believed to be filled in place and the IDNR did not require additional action. Property #43 was determined to have limited redevelopment potential so no additional work was conducted on this site.

Due to the potential for redevelopment, it was decided to further define the anomaly on property #4.

On December 27, 2004, **BARKER LEMAR** conducted limited subsurface investigative probing in the areas of anomalies. Results indicated obstructions in the area where anomalies were identified with the electromagnetic survey. A small excavation in this area was recommended to determine if the obstruction encountered was underground storage tanks. A new access agreement had to be obtained prior to conducting the excavation work, as the property had changed ownership during the assessment process. This was obtained on February 17, 2005. On February 22, 2005, **BARKER LEMAR** conducted a small excavation in the area of the obstructions during the subsurface investigation. A building foundation, metal pieces and old fence posts were uncovered. No underground storage tanks were found.

The IDNR sent a letter on March 18, 2005 indicating that based on all investigation results, no release has been verified at the site and no further action would be required.

6.0 Accomplishments

6.1 Public Outreach

On December 19, 2002, the IDNR held a Kickoff Informational Meeting at the Drake University Campus. This was attended by neighborhood representatives and consultants, including **BARKER LEMAR**.

In 2002, prior to the USTfield pilot work, Des Moines City Councilman Thomas Vlassis initiated a study of the Forest Avenue Corridor from 2nd Avenue to 34th Street. A committee was formed (the Forest Avenue Corridor Committee) to propose a strategy to guide future development and investments along Forest Avenue.

In September 2003, **BARKER LEMAR** gave a presentation to this group to explain what the USTfields pilot program was, and what the goals were for the program. This was also a chance for this group to give feedback and help identify any additional properties not identified in the initial map prepared by **BARKER LEMAR**.

BARKER LEMAR also attended a meeting with the City to assist them in their application to the City's Neighborhood Development Board for a Community Block Grant to fund redevelopment activities along the Forest Avenue Corridor in October 2003.

In June 2004, an update was given to the Forest Avenue Corridor Committee to inform them of the progress on the USTfield work.

6.2 Access

Access to the property, usually a difficult aspect of this work, was not a big challenge during the pilot project. Some of the parcels were owned by Polk County, which made the process easier, but even on privately owned parcels owners were typically willing to allow access. In most cases, a follow-up phone call was required in addition to the letter requesting access to answer questions and give the owners more of a comfort level with the work by establishing personal contact. Additionally, the availability of additional funding sources, such as the Innocent Land Owner Fund and the Global Settlement Fund, allowed owners some comfort level that additional resources might be available if contamination was identified on their property. Personal interaction to explain this process was typically required.

6.3 Leveraging additional funding

Additional funding from the State's Innocent Landowner and Global Settlement Fund was obtained for assessment and remedial activities on four of the properties. There were some restrictions to this money. There has to be identified contamination on the property prior to applying for this money. The USTfield pilot program money was used in some instances

to conduct the assessment activities to identify the contamination. Once contamination was identified, application for the funds could occur. The forms required to apply for this assistance can be relatively complicated for property owners. The IDNR assisted the owners in filling out the forms and **BARKER LEMAR** and the IDNR conducted historical record searches to obtain information to meet the necessary funding requirements. The IDNR in many cases filled out the majority of the information on the forms and personally met with the property owners to get the forms signed.

6.4 Development

The property located at 1904 Forest is currently under development as a low income housing unit. **BARKER LEMAR** was able to provide the developer with information that allowed for financing based on the work completed during the USTfield pilot.



7.0 Challenges

Some of the challenges observed during this process are the personal time commitment required for regulatory staff and the environmental consultant involved to make the project a success. The records review to justify property inclusion in the Innocent Land Owner Fund, personal meetings, and phone calls are required to keep the process flowing and to make the property owners comfortable with the process and allow assessment of their property.

The funding mechanisms available for the landowners are relatively complicated, especially for people not knowledgeable about the process. There are no written guidelines on the procedures, which allows for some flexibility on the funding agencies' part but also makes the process more convoluted for those applying. It is a relatively time consuming process.

Other challenges were the rapid turn over of the property in the area. Several parcels changed ownership during the time period the pilot project was underway. This can make access issues more difficult.

8.0 Summary

- Eleven parcels in the proposed area were assessed during the Pilot program.
- Six parcels received letters indicating no additional action was required.
- Two parcels have been assessed and one of these is awaiting Iowa DNR approval as no further action required.
- Two properties are currently under assessment.
- The City's top three redevelopment areas were assessed during the Pilot program.
- The City's top redevelopment priority, which had been a blight to the neighborhood for a number of years, was assessed and classified as high risk under the risk-based corrective action program. Funding was leveraged which paid for site assessment and will pay for site remediation and future reclassification to no action required. This work is expected to be complete in 2005.
- Additional funding of up to 3 million dollars was leveraged through Iowa's Innocent Land Owner and Global Settlement Funds.
- A low-income housing development currently under development was able to use results from assessment activities to obtain financing. This reduced possible time delays due to required Phase II assessment.
- Community outreach activities were conducted to inform neighborhood associations of the project and progress.
- The project supported additional funding for an additional Community Block Development Grant.
- Assessment of properties allowed for the stigma of "potential" issues to be resolved which may pave the way for the other goals of the Forest Avenue Corridor Committee, the Drake Neighborhood Association, the City of Des Moines, and other partners in the area to come to fruition.